

Music Tourism Convention

Cleveland, Mississippi

April 11-14, 2023

What is Music Tourism Convention?

The largest and most extensive global gathering on the topic of Music Tourism.

Music Tourism Convention is the world's biggest conference bringing together the music and tourism sectors to explore how music impacts, benefits and improves tourism offers, branding, community development, attracts investment and drives economic development.



Music Cities Events

Music enhances economic development, creates jobs and drives tourism. Music policy and strategy help build global, vibrant cities.

Music Cities Events organises world-leading international conferences on the topic of music cities and music tourism, runs educational programmes, produces the leading international awards ceremony on music cities, and runs the Music Cities Community, the first-ever platform for professionals in all industries using music to create more value in towns, cities & places.

Our next events are:

Music Cities Convention
Huntsville, USA
October 18-20, 2023

Music Cities Awards
Huntsville, USA
October 18, 2023

Music Tourism Convention
Cape Breton Island, Canada
May 29-31, 2024

Join us and use the code **MTC20** for an extra 20% off your ticket.



Overview of the week

TUESDAY 11 APRIL 2023

3:00–8:00PM Registration
at the Lyric Hotel

6:00–8:00PM Opening Reception
at the Lyric Hotel
presented by the Recording Academy® Memphis Chapter

WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2023

9:15–10:00AM Registration

10:00AM–4:30PM
Talks & Lunch
at the Lyric Hotel

5:00–7:00PM
Evening Reception
@ Dockery Farms
(shuttles there & back provided)

THURSDAY 13 APRIL 2023

9:15–10:00AM Registration

10:00AM–2:45PM
Talks & Lunch
at the Lyric Hotel

2:45–5:00PM
Self guided tour at
The Grammy Museum, MS

5:00–8:00PM
Evening Reception
The Grammy Museum, MS

The full schedule can be found here or scan the QR code:

Suggestions for the weekend

Juke Joint Festival
More info

Mockingbird Songwriters Music Festival
More info

Crosstie Arts & Jazz Festival
More info

Elvis Presley Birthplace
More info

MUSIC CITIES CONVENTION
BY SOUND DIPLOMACY

THE 12TH GLOBAL EDITION

18-20 OCTOBER, 2023

HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA, USA

DO NOT MISS THE NEXT MUSIC CITIES CONVENTION IN HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA!

Use the code MTC20 to save an extra 20% off your ticket

For more info & tickets visit: www.musiccitiesevents.com/mcc-huntsville

Conference Schedule
Wednesday, April 12, 2023

9:15–10:00AM Registration
with light breakfast

10:00–10:20AM Official Welcome

10:20–10:45AM PRESENTATION
Music Tourism's Role In Creating Audiences For Music Scenes

10:45–11:30AM PANEL
Blending Heritage With Living Culture The Perfect Recipe For An Attractive Music Destination

11:30AM–12:00PM PRESENTATION
Music Tourism In Belize
Strengthening The Music Sector To Turn It Into A Tourism Attraction

12:00–1:30PM Lunch Break

1:30–2:00PM PRESENTATION
Rock N' Roll Island
The Birthplace Of Blues Across The Pond

2:00–2:45PM PANEL
Deep South
Collaborating With Artists
presented by the Recording Academy® Memphis Chapter

2:45–3:15PM
Coffee Break

3:15–4:00PM PANEL
The Future Of Music Tourism

4:00–4:25PM PRESENTATION
The Legacy Of Dockery Farms & Its Inspiration On Roots Musicians Today

4:25–4:30PM
Closing Remarks

4:30–8:00PM
Shuttles to and from Dockery Farms (every 20 minutes)

5:00–7:00PM
EVENING RECEPTION
@ Dockery Farms

Open the programme on your phone:

Conference Schedule
Thursday, April 13, 2023

9:15–9:50AM Registration
with light breakfast

9:50–10:00AM Official Welcome

10:00–10:45AM PANEL
Music Museums How To Ensure They're Successful

10:45–11:15AM PRESENTATION
Festivals As Part Of A Tourism Strategy

11:15AM–12:00PM PANEL
Revitalising Your City Through Music Tourism

12:00–1:30PM Lunch Break

1:30–2:30PM WORKSHOPS

Key Steps To Create Your Own Music Trail

Sustainability Roadmap For Music Festivals And Music Tourism Projects

2:30–2:45PM
Closing Remarks & Handover

2:45–5:00PM Free time or explore GRAMMY Museum Mississippi
*Optional activity

Shuttles will run between the Lyric Hotel and the museum

5:00–8:00PM
OFFICIAL CLOSING RECEPTION
@ The GRAMMY MUSEUM, MS with performances by Chapel Hart and Gordie Sampson

Open the programme on your phone:

Conference Schedule
Wednesday, April 12, 2023

9:15-10:00AM
Registration with light breakfast

10:00-10:20AM OFFICIAL WELCOME

Billy Nowell, Mayor,
City of Cleveland, (MS, USA)

Craig Ray, Director,
Visit Mississippi (MS, USA)

Willie Simmons,
Transportation Commissioner,
State of Mississippi (MS, USA)

Shain Shapiro, Founder, Center for Music Ecosystems & Sound Diplomacy (GBR)

10:20-10:45AM PRESENTATION

Music Tourism's Role In Creating Audiences For Music Scenes

Presented by:

Beatriz De La Guardia Casanova,
Communications and Marketing Director,
Planet Events @ Live Nation (ESP)

In past years we've seen how cities have been recognizing more and more the role music plays as a powerful driver of tourism. When understood and utilised correctly, local music assets can be used as an effective marketing tool to promote a destination, enhance touristic experiences and create an overall narrative for a city, thus attracting more visitors and investment to the region. As part of this process, the tourism industry has been realising the power of music and has been trying to use it to its best advantage. However, what if we looked at this process in the opposite direction? What if we encouraged the local music community to use tourism, tourism products and tourism experiences as a tool to create an audience for their local scene? In this presentation, Beatriz de la Guardia, music journalist and Communications & Marketing Director from Planet Events at Live Nation Spain will give us some insights on how music festivals and other music tourism projects can take an active role in creating a strong connection between visitors and the local music community.

10:45-11:30AM PANEL

Blending Heritage With Living Culture The Perfect Recipe For An Attractive Music Destination

Dr. Rolando Herts, Director,
The Delta Center for Culture and Learning,
Delta State University (MS, USA)

Terry Smith, CEO,
Destination Cape Breton (CAN)

Tricia Walker, Music Ambassador,
Big Front Porch Productions (MS, USA)

Rachel Knox, Senior Program Officer,
Hyde Family Foundation (TN, USA)

Jaime Garza, Artistic Director,
Mole de Mayo Festival (IL, USA)

For music destinations, a key to its attractiveness is to create an effective synergy between the local cultural scene and the place's musical heritage. By doing so, traditional music will not only play a role in defining the place's cultural identity, but it will also become an element to enrich the tourist experience, consolidate the destination's branding positioning and attract tourists to the area. In return, the local music scene will also get stimulated by the income and other development opportunities from tourism, creating a virtuous cycle between the music ecosystem and the tourism industry. In this panel, we will gather a group of experts working at the crossroads of music and tourism to discuss how destinations can use these synergies. How can music be used to provide a narrative about the destination for tourists? What is the role of tourism in preserving the cultural heritage of places? What are the effects of presenting heritage music to alternative audiences? How can music enhance the experience of visitors? How can creative strategies and developments combined with cultural tourism add value to heritage locations?

11:30AM-12:00PM PRESENTATION

Music Tourism In Belize
Strengthening The Music Sector To Turn It Into A Tourism Attraction

Presented by:

Will Pech, Business Development Manager, Belize Tourism Board (BLZ)

In 2022 the Belize Tourism Board announced the start of the work on the country's first ever music tourism strategy. The purpose of this project is to assess the value of the local music and cultural ecosystems in order to develop a public policy that will support the cultural sector, and create a link between music, culture, and tourism. Additionally, this project aims at developing a music tourism marketing framework that will help to turn Belize into a globally recognized music destination. In this presentation, Will Peech, Business Development Manager at the Belize Tourism Board will give us an overview of the context leading to this project and shed some light on the motivations and expectations behind developing a music focused tourism strategy for Belize. What has been the role of music for tourism in Belize in the past? How strong is the local music ecosystem? What was the event that led into placing music tourism as a priority for authorities in Belize?

12:00-1:30PM Lunch Break

Conference Schedule
Wednesday, April 12, 2023

1:30–2:00PM PRESENTATION
Rock N' Roll Island The Birthplace Of Blues Across The Pond

Presented by:

Cheryl Robson,
Director, Aurora Metro (GBR)

Legend has it that the first time the Rolling Stones played Eel Pie Island Hotel, there were only 12 people in the audience. By the time they had finished their weekly residency five months later, they had a record deal, a full-time manager, a small army of fans and a reputation as Britain's hottest band. In the early 1960s, the Eel Pie Hotel Club became one of the focal points of English R&B and rock n' roll, as the venue where The Rolling Stones, a teenage David Bowie, Rod Stewart, Eric Clapton, the Who and Pink Floyd all first found regular audiences. Located on a small island in the River Thames, out to the West of London, Eel Pie Island was part of a music revolution that helped define an entire era of music history and whose legacy continues to influence the world's music scene. Presenter Cheryl Robson, Director of BBC's documentary 'Rock n Roll Island', will dive into the fascinating history of this musical hub. She will also introduce the journalism, artistic and educational work that the Eel Pie Island Music Project and Aurora Metro are doing to understand and promote the extraordinary music history of the island.

2:00–2:45PM PANEL
Deep South
Collaborating With Artists
presented by the Recording Academy® Memphis Chapter

Lisa D. Alexis, Director, Office of Cultural Economy New Orleans (LA, USA)

Pat Mitchell Worley, CEO, Soulsville Foundation (TN, USA)

Sheretha Bell, Vice President, Brand, Atlanta CVB & Discover (GA, USA)

Amber Hamilton, Executive Director, Memphis Music Initiative (TN, USA)

Shelley Ritter, Director, Delta Blues Museum (MS, USA)

Never before in history have people travelled as much and been as engaged in discovering other cultures as in recent decades. It has opened a unique opportunity for local communities to share their culture and history with the rest of the world by having meaningful interactions with visitors. This process is distinctly present in the Deep South, where every year, the destination draws in thousands of tourists through its musical heritage. In this panel, we gather a group of experts with a track record of bringing artists and music tourism together to discuss the best practices for when destinations collaborate with artists. We will discuss topics such as the partnering of a destination and local communities to enhance tourism in the area; supporting the local community in the right way; how to make the most of the creative structures already in place; and how to provide local artists with a platform to engage with the rest of the world.

2:45–3:15PM Coffee Break

3:15–4:00PM PANEL
The Future Of Music Tourism

Craig Ray, Director, Visit Mississippi (MS, USA)

Aubrey Preston, Founder, Americana Music Triangle (TN, USA)

Marjorie Fort-Dees, Founder & Principal Travel Advisor, Black Soul Rhythms Travel (NY, USA)

Ása Dyradóttir, Director & Project Manager, Reykjavik Music City (ISL)

Álvaro Bolaños, General Manager, Jazz & Rhythms Festival (MEX)

Music tourism is much more than taking a break from people's 9-5 routines. For travellers, it can be a source of inspiration, learning and cultural interaction. For hosts, it can be a source of opportunities and empowerment, providing jobs and development alternatives for the local community, including underrepresented and vulnerable groups. For the environment, it can also be a source of stress. So, how can we make music tourism live up to its responsibilities? In the panel, we discuss topics that will look into the future of music tourism; new opportunities available for music tourism developers with local authorities, commercial partners, and community stakeholders; including music tourism into the broader tourism strategy; environmental sustainability and inclusivity in music tourism.

4:00–4:25PM PRESENTATION
The Legacy Of Dockery Farms & Its Inspiration On Roots Musicians Today

Presented by:

Scott Barretta, Writer/Researcher, Mississippi Blues Trail (MS, USA)

The plantations of Louisiana and Mississippi played a crucial role in the development of the blues in the late 1800s and early 1900s Amongst them was Dockery Farms, widely regarded as a birthplace of the Delta blues. Founded in 1888, by the 1920s Dockery housed and employed more than 3,000 people and was the occasional home and/or performance locale of blues pioneer Charley Patton and his students including Howlin' Wolf and Roebuck 'Pops' Staples, the members of the Staples Singers.
This presentation will address how the development of the Delta's cotton industry went hand-in-hand with the spread of the blues, and address how the music produced here still inspires contemporary musicians.

4:25–4:30PM CLOSING REMARKS
Steve Azar, Hit Songwriter, Recording Artist & Producer (MS, USA)

4:30–8:00PM
Shuttles to and from Dockery Farms (every 20 minutes)

5:00–7:00PM EVENING RECEPTION
@ Dockery Farms

MUSIC TOURISM CONVENTION

BY SOUND DIPLOMACY



Music Tourism Convention is going to Canada!

May 29-31, 2024 | Cape Breton, Canada

The world's most extensive conference bringing together the music and tourism sectors to explore how music impacts, benefits and improves tourism offers, branding, partnership development and economic development.

Use the code **MTC20** to save an extra 20% off your ticket

For more info and tickets: **www.musiccitiesevents.com/cape-breton**

50 RECORDING ACADEMY® MEMPHIS CHAPTER

RECORDING ACADEMY® MEMPHIS CHAPTER celebrates 50 years of highlighting musical excellence and serving music communities across Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee!

Our region boasts America's most sigifinant musical legacies, as well as some of the most exciting musical innovators of our time!

We are thrilled to partner with the Music Tourism Convention and our local and state tourism partners to continue to shine a spotlight on the amazing music cities witin our chapter!

GRAMMY.COM



Conference Schedule
Thursday, April 13, 2023

9:15–9:50AM
Registration with light breakfast

9:50–10:00AM OFFICIAL WELCOME

Tricia Walker, Music Ambassador, Big Front Porch Productions (MS, USA)

10:00–10:45AM PANEL

Music Museums
How To Ensure They're Successful

Deana McCloud, Co-Founder, The Museum Collective (OK, USA)

Rashida Phillips, Executive Director, American Jazz Museum (IL, USA)

Malika Polk-Lee, Executive Director, B.B. King Museum (MS, USA)

Emily Havens, Executive Director, GRAMMY Museum Mississippi (MS, USA)

Anneliese Martinez, Senior Director: The Pop District, The Andy Warhol Museum (PA, USA)

Music museums can be an integral part of the cultural fabric of a place. They can help give a sense of place to the local community, create a narrative for the local music heritage, bring people together, expose people to new ideas and concepts, and instil a sense of pride in their communities. By attracting tourists and other visitors, a strong museum can also be the main anchor for a cultural quarter, the main attractor of businesses, and have a positive impact on the local economy. However, music museums face many challenges to survive in the long run, such as securing enough funding and creating the right synergies with the local community. In this panel, we will gather a group of specialists from several successful music museums to discuss the best practices to ensure their success in the long run. What are a museum's top challenges and priorities? What are the keys to overcoming and accomplishing them? How can it ensure its funding? How can digital strategies help in these processes? How should the strategies for a music museum differ from other types of museums?

10:45–11:15AM PRESENTATION

Festivals As Part Of A Tourism Strategy

Presented by:

Lutz Henke, Director of Culture, visitBerlin (Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH) (GER)

The music festival tourism market has grown significantly in the last couple of decades, with places like the UK reporting more than 12 million live music tourists per year and Spain reporting an estimated economic impact of 5.6 billion euros from its music festivals. Music festivals open many benefits for host destinations, from job creation to brand consolidation and local cultural development. However, they can also have undesired effects on the local community. In this presentation, we will take a closer look at how music festivals can be effectively used as tools for a destination tourism strategy and answer questions such as: What are the best practices for using a music festival as part of a tourism strategy? How can a music festival impact local job creation and economic growth? How can it be a tool for seasonal mitigation? Can a music festival extend visitors' stay and encourage them to return? What are its impacts on brand positioning and promotion for the host destination? What are the cultural benefits for the local community? How can we minimise the negative effects of festivals on the local community?

11:15AM–12:00PM PANEL

Revitalising Your City Through Music Tourism

Jill Hamlin, Founder, Appalachian Arts & Entertainment Awards (KY, USA)

Boo Mitchell, Producer, Engineer & Chief Manager, Royal Studios (TN, USA)

Roger Stolle, Blues Tourism Entrepreneur, Cathead Delta Blues & Folk Art (MS, USA)

Lisa La Rocca, Director of Operations, Sonic Unyon Records (CAN)

When we look at places such as Austin, Nashville, and New Orleans, there's evidence that music has influenced the transformation process of the local communities. Music can connect people, create excitement and stimulate innovation. So, if music can do all those on a personal level, can it also revitalise an entire community? In this panel, a group of experts from different cities where music plays an important role will discuss how music can help transform the community. How can we measure & understand its impact? What are some successful applications of music for community transformation? How to include music in a strategy to transform the local community? What are the synergies that music can bring to other elements of the community?

12:00–1:30PM
Lunch Break

1:30–2:30PM
WORKSHOPS

Places for each group will be limited and assigned on a first come first served basis, so make sure to sign up to any of them at the registration desk throughout the day.

Key Steps To Create Your Own Music Trail

Music trails lie at the crossroads of music and tourism. On one hand, they are an alternative tool that music scenes can use to develop audiences for their music, narrative and members. On the other hand, tourism can use music trails to add a layer of music heritage and vibrancy to the experience visitors have when visiting the area. In this roundtable, representatives from Visit Mississippi will moderate a session in which attendees of the Music Tourism Convention will be able to discuss best practices and lessons for developing a music tourism trail. What are the key steps to setting up a music trail? What is the type of audience a music trail should be directed to? Who should validate the narrative and landmarks included in the trail? What makes your music trail unique, exciting and part of a destination? How can we make sure a music trail gives back correctly to local communities? How can we ensure the funding for such a project?

Conference Schedule
Thursday, April 13, 2023

Sustainability Roadmap For Music Festivals

Going to music festivals or visiting a club & live music scene in another city can be one of the most inspiring experiences a person can have. However, doing so will also have an impact on the environment. In a time when the global climate crisis is more evident than ever, it's important that music tourists also become responsible travellers. It is also important for music festivals and music tourism projects to become as friendly to the environment as possible. How can we make this happen? How can we make the music tourism industry and its consumers minimise the negative impact of their music travels? In this workshop, we will dive into these issues in order to develop a roadmap to help music festivals and music tourism projects move towards more environmentally sustainable practices.

2:30–2:45PM

CLOSING REMARKS & HANDOVER

Tricia Walker, Music Ambassador, Big Front Porch Productions (MS, USA)

Shain Shapiro, Founder, Center for Music Ecosystems & Sound Diplomacy (GBR)

Craig Ray, Director, Visit Mississippi (MS, USA)

Terry Smith, CEO, Destination Cape Breton (CAN)

2:45–5:00PM

Free time or explore GRAMMY Museum Mississippi

*Optional activity

2:45PM ONWARDS

Shuttles to and from the GRAMMY Museum will be available

(stops at Cotton House, Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn Express)

5:00–8:00PM

OFFICIAL CLOSING RECEPTION

@ The GRAMMY MUSEUM, MS

with performances by Chapel Hart and Gordie Sampson



Speakers

ÁLVARO BOLAÑOS,
GENERAL MANAGER,
JAZZ & RHYTHMS FESTIVAL (MEX)



Cultural promoter in the city of San Cristobal de Las Casas, having music and art as the main link to improve tourism in my region and promote the sustainable development of local businesses, creating a vision of conscious and low-impact tourism.

AMBER HAMILTON,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MEMPHIS MUSIC INITIATIVE (TN, USA)



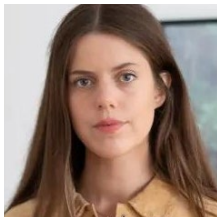
Amber Hamilton is an experienced leader, coach, and trainer with expertise in leadership strategies and nonprofit management. Currently, she serves as the Executive Director for the Memphis Music Initiative, which invests in youth through transformative music engagement, creating equitable opportunities for Black and brown youth in Memphis. She started her career in professional sports management at the NFL and NFL Players Association. She went on to lead a national group of nonprofits during her tenure at Rebuilding Together, where she served as a vice president overseeing 165 local affiliates. She also served as the Interim CEO of the Soulsville Foundation. Amber is an active board member for the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center and Grantmakers in the Arts. She holds degrees from Howard University and Georgetown University.

ANNELIESE MARTINEZ,
SENIOR DIRECTOR: THE POP DISTRICT,
THE ANDY WARHOL MUSEUM (PA, USA)



Anneliese Martinez is the senior director of The Pop District, the strategic plan and capital campaign of The Andy Warhol Museum. Her work fits in the intersection of cultural change, project management, facilitation, and executive leadership. Her passions are arts & culture, economic development, and ecological sustainability.

ÁSA DYRADÓTTIR,
DIRECTOR & PROJECT MANAGER,
REYKJAVIK MUSIC CITY (ISL)



Ása Dýradóttir is a bassist and Director / Project manager for Reykjavík Music City. Her background and studies are cultural management (MA), fine arts (BA) and museology (post MA diploma + ongoing PhD). Grassroot/indie/experimental lover, believes the music and the mind are forever intertwined.

Speakers

AUBREY PRESTON,
FOUNDER, AMERICANA MUSIC TRIANGLE (TN, USA)



Aubrey Preston is a Nashville-area real estate entrepreneur, avid preservationist and lifelong student of music history. He founded the nonprofit Americana Music Triangle preservation project to educate visitors from around the world on the geographic and creative roots of America's most influential cultural export: the nine genres of music born in the culturally rich region between New Orleans, Nashville and Memphis.

Some of Preston's other community projects include preservation and redevelopment of the historic village of Leipers Fork, an effort that helped launch the nonprofit Land Trust for Tennessee; developing the Tennessee Trails and Byways initiative, executed by the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development; preserving and restoring the historic Franklin Theatre in downtown Franklin, Tennessee; establishing the Kids on Stage Foundation; the purchase and preservation of the endangered historic RCA Studio A on Music Row in Nashville, Tennessee, and most recently; the purchase and preservation of the Thomas Hart Benton historic homesite.

BEATRIZ DE LA GUARDIA CASANOVA,
COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING DIRECTOR, PLANET EVENTS @ LIVE NATION (ESP)



Music journalist, expert in communications. Graduated in Journalism in Madrid (Spain), with media studies in Margate (UK) and a Master's degree in Music Industry Management in London (UK). She wrote a thesis on the 'Street Team' movement which was covered by the Spanish Rolling Stone magazine. Beatriz began her musical career collaborating with EMI record label, promoting bands such as Mando Diao. She also worked at music events such as 'Swedish Rock Days' festival and contributed to the radio programme 'Backstage'. She was music editor at the London newspaper El Ibérico until her return to Madrid where she is currently Communications and Marketing director at the concert promoter Planet Events @ Live Nation. Throughout her career, she has worked on tours for artists such as Maná, Maluma or Paul McCartney. Beatriz has always made visible the role of women in the music industry, through talks and interventions. She also collaborates with the music magazine Ruta 66 as a writer and is part of the female duo Cheries DJs.

BOO MITCHELL,
PRODUCER, ENGINEER & CHIEF MANAGER, ROYAL STUDIOS (TN, USA)



Boo Mitchell is a Grammy Award winning Engineer, Music Producer, and Award winning film Producer. Boo and his sister Oona, own the historic Royal Studios in Memphis TN. He has worked with some of the biggest names in Music: Al Green, Buddy Guy, Melissa Etheridge, John Mayer, Keith Richards, Wu Tang Clan and more. In 2016 Boo won the 'Record of the Year' GrammyAward for his work on the Mark Ronson Bruno Mars Hit 'Uptown Funk.'

CHERYL ROBSON,
DIRECTOR, AURORA METRO (GBR)



Cheryl is an award-winning writer, filmmaker and publisher who trained at BBC. Her feature documentary 'Rock n Roll Island' aired on BBC4 in 2020 and was a *Sunday Times* Critics Choice, *Radio Times* and the *Observer* 'Pick' programme. It achieved 750,000+ viewers and won four awards. She is currently making two more feature-length music docs. As the founder of Aurora Metro Books she has published over 300 British and international authors with many accolades including being a finalist in the Independent Publisher Guild's Diversity Awards (2019 & 2020) and a finalist in the ITV National Diversity Awards (Lifetime Achievement) (2019). Music books she has edited include: *50 Women In The Blues, On The Trail Of Americana, Women Make Noise, The British Beat Explosion*. She is also leading the campaign for the erection of a statue of Virginia Woolf in Richmond-upon-Thames in England.

Speakers

CRAIG RAY,
DIRECTOR, VISIT MISSISSIPPI (MS, USA)



Craig Ray is the Director of Visit Mississippi, the Tourism Division of the Mississippi Development Authority. Ray has served in this role since 2016 and previously held this role from 2004-2009. Ray promotes Mississippi as a destination for tourists and filmmakers by highlighting the state's rich history, cultural and natural resources, and recreational opportunities.

During his initial tenure as Director of Visit Mississippi, Ray played a key role in branding the state as 'Mississippi–The Birthplace of America's Music.' He also oversaw the development and launch of the groundbreaking Mississippi Blues Trail, one of the most innovative pieces of cultural and heritage tourism of this century. Today, the Mississippi Blues Trail has more than 200 markers throughout the world. Ray has more than two decades of experience in state and national public service, having served in senior-level positions for three presidents of the United States and three Mississippi governors.

DEANA MCCLOUD,
CO-FOUNDER, THE MUSEUM COLLECTIVE (OK, USA)



Deana McCloud is a co-founder of the Museum Collective, and a partner in the Folk Americana Roots Hall of Fame in Boston. From her career as the Founding Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Woody Guthrie Center and the former curator of music and programs for the Woody Guthrie Folk Festival, she brings a broad scope of knowledge about music history to honor the past, celebrate the present, and nurture the future. A former educator, McCloud serves on a variety of boards supporting social justice initiatives, musicians, and the arts, and is a regular presenter at music conferences and festivals.

EMILY HAVENS,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GRAMMY MUSEUM MISSISSIPPI (MS, USA)



Emily Havens is the Executive Director of GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi, a state-of-the-art, non-profit music museum located in Cleveland, MS near the campus of Delta State University. Having served in this role since January 2015, Emily oversees all aspects of the museum's business operations and strategy, including fundraising, programming, and education and outreach. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Chamber of Commerce, Cleveland Tourism Council, Cleveland Rotary Club, and Junior Auxiliary of Cleveland, and is a Paul Harris Fellow. Emily is a member of Mississippi Tourism Association and Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy.

JAIME GARZA,
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, MOLE DE MAYO FESTIVAL (IL, USA)



Jaime Garza is a Chicago-based musician, multi-instrumentalist, producer, and event director with a passion for Mexican folklore, specifically the Son Jarocho tradition. He actively performs and co-founded the psychedelic band, Dos Santos, who have released four albums and toured extensively. In addition, Garza founded and leads Almafuerte, an experimental folk, Latin jazz, and Afro-Latino project. He also founded and curates Pachanka Music Culture, which has booked over 300 Latino acts from the United States and Latin America. Pachanka Music Culture is also the body in charge of the Artistic Direction of Mole de Mayo Festival, an annual outdoor music, arts and culinary festival in the Pilsen neighbourhood in Chicago, attracting over 100K people, and growing steadily for more than 14 years.

Speakers

JILL HAMLIN,
FOUNDER, APPALACHIAN ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT AWARDS (KY, USA)



Jill Hamlin is a graduate of Morehead State University. Upon graduation she was accepted into The Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland where she received her master's degree in Social Anthropology Ethnomusicology. She is a member of the British Society of Ethnomusicologists and the Society of Ethnomusicology. She currently serves as the Assistant Director of Fine Arts for Big Sandy Community and Technical College and teaches Introduction to Cultural Anthropology. In conjunction with Big Sandy Community and Technical College, The Mountain Arts Center, The City of Prestonsburg, Prestonsburg Tourism, and CMH 23, Jill spearheaded the creation of the Appalachian Arts and Entertainment Awards or 'The Appy's' which seeks to showcase the entire 13-state Appalachian Region by highlighting established talent and showcasing emerging talent. The Appy's program has been recognized by KCTCS and awarded the program the Innovation Award for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and was recognized by the Kentucky Travel Industry Association (KTIA) with the 2022 Bronze Traverse Award for Experience Development.

LISA D. ALEXIS,
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF CULTURAL ECONOMY NEW ORLEANS (LA, USA)



Lisa D. Alexis is the Director of the Office of Cultural Economy. She also serves as the CEO of the New Orleans Tourism and Cultural Fund, where, since 2019, she has worked with the cultural community to achieve a respectful appreciation of their contributions to the city. The mission of the New Orleans Tourism and Cultural Fund is to support cultural industries and culture bearers of the City of New Orleans through partnerships, grants, and programs to advance sustainable tourism. This non-profit economic development corporation is dedicated to strengthening New Orleans culture-bearers with resources that uplift the city's traditions and aid the evolution of skills, knowledge, and ideas into goods, services, and places that support the local cultural economy and tourism offerings.

LISA LA ROCCA,
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, SONIC UNYON RECORDS (CAN)



Lisa La Rocca is currently Director of Operations at Canadian independent record label Sonic Unyon Records. Alongside the company's label activities, Sonic Unyon produces Hamilton's largest festival, Supercrawl (an annual weekend-long multi-arts event that draws over 250,000 people to the city's downtown), and many other live music and cultural events year-round. In addition, Sonic Unyon runs two live music venues in Hamilton, and a management division, through which Lisa manages hip-hop artist LTtheMonk. Lisa has helped implement the JUNO Awards' JUNOFest (2015) and JUNO Songwriters' Circle (2019), currently serves as a juror for FACTOR Canada, and is an active member of both the Hamilton Music Advisory Team and the Hamilton Arts Advisory Commission. She is also a part-time PhD student in the Communication and Culture program at York University, with a research focus in popular music studies.

LUTZ HENKE,
DIRECTOR OF CULTURE, VISITBERLIN (BERLIN TOURISMUS & KONGRESS GMBH) (GER)



Lutz Henke is a curator and cultural scientist based in Berlin. He has shaped the city's public and cultural policies as the Director of Culture at visitBerlin since 2016. While fostering a dialogue between the administration, local stakeholders, and cultural actors Henke develops and implements innovative programs with the public interest at heart.In his independent practice he continues to closely collaborate with artists and to lead cultural projects worldwide: from the North to the South Pole and from the Algerian desert to Manhattan. Henke's work, research, and curatorial actions focus on urban space and the public domain, memory and remembrance, aesthetic interventions, and frontiers in their diverse appearances. He founded various project spaces, received a grant from Olafur Eliasson's 'Institute for Spatial Experiments', taught at several art schools and universities, published a variety of texts, and worked with the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation amongst many institutions. He is also the Director for the Metropolitan Conference for the Immediate Present: Q Berlin Questions.

Speakers

MALIKA POLK-LEE,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
B.B. KING MUSEUM (MS, USA)



Malika Polk-Lee first came to the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in 2012 as its chief administrative officer. She stepped into the role of executive director in 2015. As the current executive director, she ensures local programming excellence while maintaining the high quality of exhibits that welcome visitors from all over the world. She understands that service to the residents of the area is vital, and that it helps build a stronger community as well as offering guests a richer experience in the museum and the Mississippi Delta as a whole. She has the ability to find, develop, and retain staff members that share her passion for carrying on the legacy of B.B. King through events and educational programs. She was fortunate to get to know Mr. King before his death in 2015, and she is now responsible for working with the board of directors, architects, and grantors to plan and implement the Memorial Garden, his final resting place on the museum grounds.

MARJORIE FORT-DEES,
FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL TRAVEL ADVISOR,
BLACK SOUL RHYTHMS TRAVEL (NY, USA)



Marjorie Fort-Dees is a seasoned traveler and the founder and principal travel advisor of Black Soul Rhythms Travel. With over 20 years of experience managing corporate travel, Marjorie has honed her skills to make travel dreams a reality for her clients. Her journey as a travel advisor began in 2017 when she joined a host travel agency where she started her ongoing mentorship and training. She is a member of the American Society of Travel Advisors and a destination specialist for numerous countries. Marjorie's background includes a Masters degree in Business Administration, and career in financial services and human resources. As a music lover, Marjorie has built an extensive database of music events worldwide, setting her apart from other travel advisors. With her knowledge of the travel industry and relationships with a worldwide network of suppliers, vendors, and tourism boards, Marjorie is committed to making every travel experience memorable and seamless.

PAT MITCHELL WORLEY,
CEO, SOULSVILLE FOUNDATION (TN, USA)



Pat Mitchell Worley is CEO of the Soulsville Foundation, which operates the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, Stax Music Academy, and The Soulsville Charter School, all at the original site of Stax Records in the Memphis community known as Soulsville USA. She brings decades of experience to her new role. She began teaching part-time at the Stax Music Academy in 2017 and was promoted to executive director in 2018. Pat has been the co-host of Beale Street Caravan for almost 20 years, a globally syndicated roots radio show broadcast from Memphis. A former development director for the Memphis Music Foundation, she can be heard narrating selections in the B.B. King Museum, Cotton Museum, Mississippi River Museum, and in numerous documentaries on Memphis history and music. She regularly hosts artist Q&As for organizations such as the GRAMMY Museum Mississippi and Oxford American. Among her other roles was serving on the staff of the Blues Foundation in the late 1990s, where she oversaw all of the international nonprofit's communications and educational efforts alongside helping produce the W.C. Handy Blues Awards, the Lifetime Achievement Awards, and the International Blues Challenge.

RACHEL KNOX,
SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER,
HYDE FAMILY FOUNDATION (TN, USA)



Rachel Knox serves as the Senior Program Officer for the Thriving Arts and Culture and Engaged Leadership and Civic Pride portfolios at Hyde Family Foundation where she manages approximately $2.2m/year in grants to area non-profits. Previously, she worked for Innovate Memphis as a Program Associate and at the Orpheum Theatre as the Manager of Teacher Professional Development and Community Partnerships. Rachel graduated with her Master's in Public Policy and Administration from American University. Previously, she completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre from the University of Memphis with a concentration in Costume Design and Technology. In 2015, Rachel Knox ran for City Council and made it into a run-off. In 2016, Ms. Knox was nominated as one of the Memphis Flyer's 20 Under 30 and received the Salzburg Global Seminar Fellowship for Young Cultural Innovators in the Arts. In 2018, she was named one of the 40 Under 40 Urban Elite recipients. In 2020, she received Memphis Business Journals 40 Under 40 award.

Speakers

RASHIDA PHILLIPS,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN JAZZ MUSEUM (IL, USA)



Rashida Phillips joined the American Jazz Museum as Executive Director in January 2020, now leading strategic re-envision and revitalization of the near 25-year signature institution. Phillips spent 16 years at some of Chicago's most impactful organisations, including a previous role organising turnaround at the Old Town School of Folk Music, the largest community arts school with an acclaimed concert venue in the nation. She is also a jazz vocalist with a M.A. in Jazz History and Research from Rutgers University and has a B.A. in English, minoring in African American Studies from Oberlin College. Her career reflects a commitment to the intersection of arts, culture, community, and education. In New York, she helped launch the National Jazz Museum in Harlem, building support, visibility, and audience while co-producing 'Harlem's Song,' at the White House, programmed Chicago-area Jazz and Humanities festivals, developed arts integration research and curriculum models for schools, and supported justice-centred work of youth and community.

ROGER STOLLE,
BLUES TOURISM ENTREPRENEUR, CATHEAD DELTA BLUES & FOLK ART (MS, USA)



After a successful 13-year marketing career in Corporate America, Roger Stolle moved to Clarksdale in 2002 with a mission to organise and promote the blues from within. The idea? Clarksdale needed to own its blues history and use music to create a year-round tourism industry, targeting downtown revitalization. Stolle owns Cat Head Delta Blues & Folk Art, facilitates Clarksdale's now 365-nights-a-year live music, co-organizes multiple annual festivals (incl. Juke Joint Festival, Clarksdale Film Festival, Clarksdale Caravan Music Fest), contributes to magazines (incl. Blues Music Magazine, Delta Magazine), and serves on the Visit Clarksdale tourism commission. He authored Hidden History of Mississippi Blues and Mississippi Juke Joint Confidential, occasionally hosts blues radio shows, and co-produced films like M for Mississippi and Moonshine & Mojo Hands. He has produced blues albums and toured Mississippi bluesmen to at least 8 foreign countries. Stolle's Cat Head was Clarksdale's 2019 Small Business of the Year.

ROLANDO HERTS,
DIRECTOR, THE DELTA CENTER FOR CULTURE AND LEARNING, DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY (MS, USA)



Dr. Herts is the director of The Delta Center and executive director of the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area. He also is a Research Fellow with Tourism RESET, a multi-university and interdisciplinary research and outreach initiative focused on race, ethnicity, and social equity in tourism. His community engagement and partnership development expertise has strengthened university collaborations with the National Park Service, the Alliance of National Heritage Areas, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Humanities Alliance, Mississippi Delta Blues Festival Brazil, and various regional and community-based organizations. He serves on the Alliance of National Heritage Areas governing board, the Delta Regional Authority's Delta Leadership Network Regional Advisory Council, the Association of African American Museums Board of Directors, and the Advisory Committee for the Center for the Center of Southern Culture at University of Mississippi. He also has served on the Mississippi Historical Society Board of Directors, the Mississippi Blues Commission (statutory member), and the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Services (gubernatorial appointment).

SCOTT BARRETTA,
WRITER/RESEARCHER, MISSISSIPPI BLUES TRAIL (MS, USA)



Scott Barretta, a resident of Greenwood, is a writer/researcher for the Mississippi Blues Trail, the host of the Mississippi Public Broadcasting radio program Highway 61, and a sociology instructor at the University of Mississippi. He is author of multiple publications, the former editor and a continuing contributor to Living Blues magazine, has written the text for exhibits at B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center and the Grammy Museum Mississippi, and co produced the Mississippi Fred McDowell documentary 'Shake 'em On Down.' His work with the blues has been recognized via a Mississippi Governor's Award for the Arts, a Keeping the Blues Alive award, and a citation of merit from the Mississippi Institute for Arts and Letters.

Speakers

SHELLEY RITTER,
DIRECTOR,
DELTA BLUES MUSEUM (MS, USA)



Shelley is the Executive Director of the Delta Blues Museum, a position she has held since 2003. Under her direction the Museum has expanded its collection and its exhibit space. In 2013, the Museum was awarded a National Medal for Museum and Library Service and in 2014 its arts & education program received a National Arts & Humanities Youth Program Award. Prior to this position she served as the field services curator for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and was the archives manager for Elvis Presley Enterprises. She is a lifelong student of Mississippi's cultural and artistic heritage. When not at the museum she can be found gardening, cooking, reading, kayaking, or tending to her menagerie of pets.

SHERETHA BELL,
VICE PRESIDENT, BRAND,
ATLANTA CVB & DISCOVER (GA, USA)



Sheretha Bell has more than 20 years of experience developing and leading creative teams with a customer-centric approach to business success. She currently leads brand and editorial strategy for Discover Atlanta's digital content, social platforms and print publications. She steers the brand consistency and creative direction of Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau's corporate events, campaigns and award-winning website, DiscoverAtlanta.com. Bell plays a key role in the development and execution of the Music Voyager television episodes that feature Atlanta's creative community. She helped conceptualize and execute the award-winning I AM ATL and Atlanta Is campaigns.Her team's most recent new diversity marketing efforts, which highlight the Black Travel Experience through ATL Unguided, won an HSMAI Platinum Adrian Award. Bell co-led the diversity and inclusion efforts for ACVB including the development of the We Are ATL I.D.E.A. task force. She is the brand marketing lead for the LT Family Foundation and Project Future. She is an inaugural board member, advisory chair, and brand/community engagement chair for the Ice Cream Festival Foundation – a non-profit organization that provides educational opportunities and programs to introduce youth to careers and entrepreneurship in hospitality and tourism.

STEVE AZAR,
HIT SONGWRITER, RECORDING ARTIST & PRODUCER (MS, USA)



Steve Azar, a Mississippi delta native, is a hit songwriter, recording artist, and music producer. He has released seven critically acclaimed studio albums including Waitin' on Joe which rendered a hit title track and #1 music video as well as the smash hit 'I Don't Have To Be Me ('Til Monday)', a recipient of three coveted BMI Million-Air awards. The hit single 'Sunshine' (also a #1 video) and the album Slide On Over Here were featured in the 2011 'Oprah's Favorite Things' edition of O Magazine. The Steve Azar & The Kings Men album titled Down At The Liquor Store is backed by veteran bandmates of B.B. King, Elvis Presley, and other icons of music with a feature documentary, Something in the Water, chronicling the making of the record. His latest, My Mississippi Reunion, winner of the 2021 Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters award for best contemporary album, features a collection of past and new songs inspired by Azar's roots. The song 'One Mississippi' is the official state song of Mississippi.

TERRY SMITH,
CEO, DESTINATION CAPE BRETON (CAN)



Terry Smith has worked in the Cape Breton Island tourism industry for the past 25+ years. In that time, he has had the opportunity to work with such music and cultural organizations as the Celtic Colours International Festival, the Gaelic College, the historic Savoy Theatre, the Louisbourg 300 Celebrations, the Rock the Dock Festival, among many others. Since 2015, he has worked with Destination Cape Breton, first in a senior marketing role and as CEO since February 2019. As a tourism marketing strategist, Terry has worked on tourism projects throughout Canada, but he is most passionate about working to grow Cape Breton Island's tourism economy. With Destination Cape Breton, Terry's team has placed an emphasis on integrating the Island's music within the promotion of the destination. This has included partnering with touring artists, commissioning new musical works for videos and commercials, producing new music events and creating a soon-to-be launched live music app.

Speakers

TRICIA WALKER,
MUSIC AMBASSADOR, BIG FRONT PORCH PRODUCTIONS (MS, USA)



Award-winning singer/songwriter Tricia Walker spent 25+ years in the music industry in Nashville before returning to her native Mississippi to develop the Delta Music Institute entertainment industry studies program at her alma mater, Delta State University. She retired from that position as Director Emerita in 2019 and is now focusing her creative energies on developing and promoting the Deep Roots music project through a partnership between the City of Cleveland and her company, Big Front Porch Productions.

WILL PECH,
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, BELIZE TOURISM BOARD (BLZ)



As a Business Development Manager, Will works towards the development of the tourism industry in Belize by enhancing the accumulated education, experience and knowledge. He finds and creates alternative opportunities that can better support the Belizean tourism product and address the current challenges in private, public and communal sectors. His motivation is to expand the areas that can assist local stakeholders and conserve Belize's invaluable unique tourism offers.

MUSIC CITIES COMMUNITY



The Official Event Group is hosted on the Music Cities Community, an online platform where music cities professionals meet.
Our members include people in every profession and sector using music to create more value in towns and cities all over the world.

Join the Official Event Group and connect with the other Music Tourism Convention delegates online:

Join Here

You can join the Official Event Group and the Community for free. We also have paid plan subscriptions which include benefits such as access to all past in-person and online event recordings, ticket discounts, advertising opportunities and more.

Members

Our **1700+** members profiles include Cultural Advisor, Artist Manager, Music Industry CEO, Music Office Executive Director, Head of UNESCO City of Music, Head of Projects, Head of Marketing, Production Manager, Professor, Event Director, Diversity & Inclusion Director, and more.

To sign up to the Community, please visit musiccitiescommunity.com

Additional Info

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Music Cities Events is dedicated to developing and enhancing socially responsible practices and to reducing the environmental impact of our global events.

All provided catering supplies are made of reusable materials and the food offer is leaning towards vegetarian and vegan options.

We've also kept the number of printed items and gadgets to a minimum. The badge you're wearing is made of unbleached brown recycled paper and the lanyard is made of recycled PET.

Learn more about our commitment to the SDGs here.



MUSIC CITIES EVENTS

BRINGING IDEAS TOGETHER TO CREATE BETTER MUSIC CITIES

Interested in sponsoring or hosting one of MCE's Events?

Get in touch with Sandra Perens, our Event Manager, at **sandra@sounddiplomacy.com**

Partners

Cleveland, Mississippi Music Tourism Convention has been made possible by a number of partners and supporters. We thank them for their time and effort in making this all come together!

Host organisations

Visit Mississippi

Visit Cleveland Mississippi

Cleveland Mississippi

Delta State University

Grammy Museum Mississippi

Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area

Supporting partners

Delta Magazine

B.B. King Museum

Visit Clarksdale Coahoma County, Mississippi

61 Mississippi Delta

Clark Beverage Group, Inc. Since 1903

Cleveland, MS. Whole Cellars Package Store

LH

Cannon Motors of Mississippi

Mitchell Distributing Distributor of Anheuser-Busch Beers

NEHI Bottling Co.

Sponsors

Recording Academy Memphis Chapter

Macon Georgia

MUSIC TOURISM DESIGN & BRANDING
A&C Studio: www.aliceclarke.com

MUSIC CITIES AWARDS
BY MUSIC CITIES EVENTS

Music Cities Awards 2023

The Music Cities Awards is a global competition designed to acknowledge and reward the most outstanding applications of music for economic, social, environmental and cultural development in cities and places all around the world.

The 2023 Music Cities Awards will be held alongside the Huntsville Music Cities Convention 2023, and the application period is now open!

TO FIND OUT MORE PLEASE VISIT
MUSICCITIESEVENTS.COM/AWARDS

Connect with us across the MCE social channels!

@musiccitiesevents

@musiccitiesevents

Music Cities Events

www.musiccitiesevents.com

Tag #MusicTourismClevelandMS and #MusicTourismConvention to share your experience with other delegates and the wider Music Cities Events Network